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TOSEC 162

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BRUSSELS NICOSIA ANKARA
FROM ATHENS MAR 8

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ATHENS 1894

DEPT PASS THE SECRETARY

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: OVIP GR PFOR MARR

SUBJECT: PROMINENT PRESS ATTENTION KISSINGER-BITSIOS MEETING

REF: SECTO 68

1. ATHENS PRESS GAVE PROMINENT AND ON WHOLE FAVORABLE
REPORT TO TWO AND HALF HOUR MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY AND GREEK
FORMIN BITSIOS IN BRUSSELS MARCH 7. SEVERAL
PAPERS USED HEADLINE: "BITSIOS-KISSINGER: THERE IS SOME
PROGRESS; SOME HOPE." MOST STORIES EITHER QUOTED OR
PARAPHRASED SECRETARY'S AFFIRMATION OF US READINESS
"TO DO EVERYTHING WITHIN OUR POWER TO SPEED UP SOLUTION
TO THIS DIFFICULT AND TRAGIC PROBLEM."

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2. BITSIOS' STATEMENT (REFTEL) AND HIS PRESS CONFERENCE

FOLLOWING MEETING ALSO GIVEN PROMINENT TREATMENT. TO PRESS QUERY BITSIOS REAFFIRMED GREECE'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE MILITARY ORGANS OF THE ALLIANCE. HE EMPHASIZED GREEK ARMED FORCES WERE NOW UNDER EXCLUSIVELY GREEK COMMAND. LIBERAL TO VIMA REPORTED WITHOUT ATTRIBUTION THAT BITSIOS ALSO SAID GREECE FIRST WISHED TO EXAMINE THE PROBLEM OF AMERICAN MILITARY BASES IN GREECE BEFORE PROCEEDING TO TECHNICAL DETAILS OF GREECE'S WITHDRAWAL FROM MILITARY COMMAND OF NATO. TO VIMA ALSO SPECULATED THAT SECRETARY HAD PROPOSED TO BITSIOS THAT GREECE ASSIST IN NON INTERNATIONALIZING CYPRUS PROBLEM, DELAY DISCUSSIONS ON FUTURE OF AMERICAN BASES IN GREECE, AND BE TOLERANT OF US NEED TO CONTINUE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY.

3. MOST PAPERS PROMINENTLY RAN PHOTO OF KISSINGER AND BITSIOS IN SERIOUS BUT RELAXED DISCUSSION.
STEARNS
UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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